

## ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: The (Un) Reading of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*

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This paper explores the issue of Rushdie's "vexing" translational endeavor in his novel *The Satanic Verses*. Rushdie, I argue, "vexes" the reader by playing upon the idea of translating one language game (dream) into another (reality). The misinterpretations that underlie this translational endeavor emerges, I argue, from the incommensurability of different language games which Rushdie attempts at bridge. However, this translational endeavor is usually read separately by critics. Rushdie's desire to conduct a simultaneous deconstruction founders and fails to establish a ground common for both. My argument progresses in three sections: the first focuses on the notion of mutations and metamorphoses happening in the plot (real) and sub-plot (dream) of the novel both of which echo, as well as, overshadow one another in attempting to establish a common ground for the other. Second, I contend with the religious subtext and the charge of blasphemy (a point which is analogous to the issue of "original" and "translation"). Finally, I look at Rushdie's idea of polyglot "Indianness" which is tied to the exploration of the hybrid nature of the South Asian migrants in Britain. All of the three sections explore the arbitrary relationship of signifiers with the signifieds that result in a partial

transformation (instead of translation) of one text (language game) into another. Rushdie extensively deploys this trope of translation to “vex” the reader throughout his narrative in *The Satanic Verses*.